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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-FIFTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

THE BERLIN CHALLENGE

MR. MACMILLAN'S reconnoitering mission to Moscow could hardly have been more successful in finding out to what extent trouble actually lies ahead. The "electioneering" speech of Mr. Khrushchev, while his guest was still in Russia, could hardly have made things plainer. Russia's belated acceptance of a preliminary foreign ministers' conference does not change the prospect much, for it involves difficult conditions and the East-West differences over Berlin appear too marked to be ironed out readily at any level.

The Russians intensely dislike the present set-up in Berlin. West Berlin is simply too energetic and too prosperous. It not only puts East Berlin, and East Germany, in a most unfavorable light, but it stands out as the potential capital of an independent Germany reunited along Western lines. Moreover, Russian fear of a revived Germany is obviously very real. West Berlin also serves as a refuge for large numbers fleeing from Communism, by virtue of the Four Power agreement which the Kremlin now wants to terminate altogether.

That is why Khrushchev has set an impending deadline, and why he may announce a Soviet East-German pact, if agreement is not forthcoming from the Berlin conference. However much his remarks may veer from threats to cordiality, the Russian leader is bent on effecting major changes in Berlin. Will the U.S.S.R. insist on having its way in making West Berlin a "free city" without foreign troops regardless of the cost?

It must not be forgotten that, generally speaking, the Soviets like the way things are going. Except for Germany, and some fears of the China of the future, Russian prospects seem good. Productive capacity and living standards are steadily rising. The U.S.S.R.'s prestige is at an apex. Russian influence is growing rapidly among the underdeveloped peoples. Russia continues to gain ground in the cold war. The advantages of avoiding a shooting war are many. In the Soviet Union as elsewhere the instinct of self-preservation counsels against embarking on, or adhering to, any course that could eventuate in thermonuclear destruction. Russia's determination to force its new set-up for Berlin therefore has its limits.

CAN THE WEST utilize such limits, however, in preparing to meet the showdown on Berlin? Only by combining firmness on the main points with some flexibility on non-essentials. If an agreement cannot be reached, East Germans will presumably take over the control points for military supplies for the Allied military garrisons. If they should let these convoys through and place no serious obstacles in the way of Berlin's sizable civilian imports and exports, it would be difficult to do much about it. And the U.S.S.R. would have ended the Four Power pact unilaterally.

If, on the other hand, the East Germans—with the Russian backing they have been promised—start interfering with any sort of shipment to or from Berlin, the gauntlet will be down. What are the NATO powers to do then? A new airlift is hardly the answer; it would "violate" East German territory to begin with. Even if the planes were not shot at from the outset, radar-jamming devices would confine the operation to daytime flying, and the tonnage involved for the Berlin of today would be far beyond the available planes' capacity. In any case the attempt to meet the Berlin crisis by a new airlift would be defeatist, betraying a weakness of resolution that is fatal when dealing with the Soviets.

Another course, and one recommended in the *Saturday Evening Post* by former Secretary of State

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Dean Acheson, is to reject East German orders to turn back. Here is the crux of the whole matter, for strenuous preparation will be required if the NATO powers are to be in a position to attempt to force their convoys through.

It is unthinkable that a thermonuclear attack on the Soviet Union—or even the idle threat of such an attack—could serve as a viable answer to a blockade of Berlin. With the U.N. Security Council powerless because of the veto, the only real choice open to the United States is capitulation or resistance backed by non-thermonuclear weapons. This last goes back to the conviction that if our resistance is determined enough the Russians have too much at stake actually to shoot it out with us.

The Khrushchev ultimatum is of three months standing. What have the United States and the other NATO powers been doing to build up our bargaining position by strengthening our armed forces? France is tragically enmeshed in Algeria. And instead of beefing up for the loudly proclaimed showdown, the other allied forces have, if anything, been reduced in strength. For the longer pull the American missile program is still lagging.

The Soviet Union is not without its own stresses, strains and internal weaknesses. And a war against the West would expose it to the uprising of its belt of East European satellites. The West is even more intent on avoiding a general outbreak of hostilities. But our tragic failure to steel our resolution and build up our strength may result in our being confronted with impossible alternatives: to back down into an abysmal defeat for the peoples we are pledged to protect and inevitably for the way of life we believe in, or set off an all-destroying thermonuclear war.

THE COURT AND THE A.B.A.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS recently adopted by the American Bar Association, the largest legal fraternity in the country, emphasize one of the continuing debates of our time—the extent to which we must sacrifice some measure of freedom in order to be secure, or conversely, the degree to which we must imperil our security in order to be free. For the A.B.A.'s recommendations for Congressional action were designed to tighten our security measures. In presenting these recommendations the A.B.A. conveyed an implied rebuke to the Supreme Court for decisions which, it has been charged, have eased the way for Communist activities.

In the last several years the Court has passed decisions which significantly affect the tone and the reality of American life. In 1956 the Court ruled that Congress had preempted the field of subversion and had made corresponding state statutes unenforceable. On June 17, 1957, the Court handed down three historic decisions. In the Jencks case it said that if a man is to be convicted on secret evidence, that evidence must be produced even if the documents are in "secret" F.B.I. files. The Watkins ruling stated that Congressional authority is broad but limited, that witnesses cannot be compelled to make disclosures outside of clearly defined areas of investigation. In the Smith Act case the Court drew a sharp distinction between a theoretical advocacy of revolution and the actual incitement to action and ruled that only the latter could be considered a crime. In 1958 the Court ruled that the Secretary of State could not withhold a passport because an applicant was a Communist or was suspected of being one.

All of these rulings safeguarded civil liberties, strengthened the rights of the individual. Even at the time they were made they drew strong criticism, much of which was acrimonious and unhelpful. Those who claim for themselves the label "anti-Communists" as if it were an exclusive, patented term saw the decisions as a defeat for themselves and a victory for the Communists; for Communists could, along with other American citizens, claim rights guaranteed by the Constitution as these were interpreted by the Court. But the decisions were also widely acclaimed by those who feared that civil liberties had gradually been eroded, that the Communists were winning a domestic victory by forcing Americans to relinquish their traditional freedoms.

If we believe that "our freedom is our security," then a loss of one necessarily entails a loss of the other. But this epigrammatic statement answers none of the practical problems posed by the threat of subversion. There has been in this country, there is now and will probably be for years a tension between the needs of security and the demands of freedom. And to large questions such as these there will be no final answer satisfactory to all. For the questions involve the recurrent, the inevitable, struggle between the rights of the individual and the rights of the State.

As long as there can be no final answers it is well, in a democracy such as ours, that our interim solutions undergo constant scrutiny and challenge. It is also well that the criticism which issues from examination be directed to the problem and not to inferred motives or attitudes of those who hold op-

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posing opinions. Although The Commonweal welcomed the Supreme Court decisions which are being challenged, the recommendations of the A.B.A. demand attention. While they are not, we think, finally persuasive, they represent responsible statements of those with whom we differ.

SOMETHING FISHY

SOVIET fishing boats engaged in more or less peculiar activities have been spotted with increasing frequency in the last few years almost all over the world. There have been reports of strange doings by Russian fishing boats off the coasts of the United States and Canada, in the Caribbean, in Scandinavian and Philippine waters. What these boats are up to in addition to fishing, if anything, remains mysterious.

Now the mystery has deepened—and quite close to home. In the Grand Banks area, off Newfoundland, five trans-Atlantic communications cables have recently been cut or broken—all in a period of five days. A Soviet fishing trawler, observed to be operating in the immediate area, was subsequently stopped on the high seas and boarded by a party from the U.S. picket ship *Roy O. Hale*. The inspection of the trawler was uneventful and inconclusive; no indications of intentions other than fishing were found, and the widely publicized comments of the naval officer who led the boarding party didn't add up to much. He thought that the trawler might have cut the cables; if it did cut the cables, the action might have been deliberate and might have been accidental; his personal opinion was that the Russian boat had cut the cables accidentally.

Reaction from the U.S.S.R. has been slow, but it seems now to be gathering momentum. The Soviets are charging that the action of the U.S. Navy in boarding and searching the trawler was "unlawful," "war play," an act of "premeditated provocation."

There things stand, at this writing. But what it all means is hard to make out. Did the Soviet trawler cut the cables at all? If so, why? Cutting five of the many trans-Atlantic cables would not seriously affect our overseas communications system. Moreover, such an action would be immediately detected, as shown by the quick action in regard to the Soviet trawler.

And why, without further ado, was the Navy ship ordered to stop and search the Russian fishing boat? Under the circumstances this seems an extreme and somewhat risky step, taken as it was without public indication of any prior complaint or report to Soviet authorities. At this time particularly, as we confront the Russians over the Berlin powder keg, and as we scrupulously avoid any "provocative" action in that part of the world, it seems contradictory that we should move so rapidly with regard to Russian activity in the Atlantic. That the Soviets might regard our action as unfriendly, justified as it was by the invocation of a treaty dating back to 1884 and the Russian Czarist government, seems obvious. Why was the U.S. so quick to take this risk?

The explanations may be simple, involving nothing more mysterious than routine human error and confusion. But the strange Affair of the Soviet Fishing Boat, up to now, easily qualifies as a first class suspense-thriller.

EXIT MR. MURROW

IT IS NOW some weeks since Edward R. Murrow announced that he was taking a year's leave of absence from C.B.S., but his departure continues to be widely discussed. In one sense this continuing interest in what is no longer news seems odd. Mr. Murrow's long-time contract specifically granted him the right to take such a leave. By any normal standards, if not his own, his schedule of work has always been staggering. Finally, he has himself denied that his decision indicates any serious disagreement between himself and network officials. Yet, despite all this, rumors persist that he would not be taking a leave if it were not for a deep and growing dissatisfaction with the way the television industry is being run.

It is on this score that the Murrow affair is significant. There is, we think, a widespread feeling that T.V. is going downhill as a serious artistic or intellectual medium, and that even on the level of pure entertainment it is hardly inspired. If the people we talk to are in any way representative, a good many viewers took their own leave of absence from television long before Ed Murrow applied for his. Even if one takes at face value the Murrow insistence that all is well between him and television—and many do not take his disclaimers very seriously—television's growing army of critics feel there is still an inescapable moral in the public reaction at the news of his withdrawal, even if for only a year.

The fact is that most Americans have come to accept as a part of television life a situation which

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would be seen as intolerable in any other medium. Advertisers can buy space in newspapers or magazines to sell their wares; unless the publishing enterprise is a venal one, they cannot determine which stories or articles will appear and what their content will be. Yet television is apparently doomed forever to operate under a system whereby advertisers not only buy time to put across their message but actually determine what will be seen in those time periods when most people want to watch.

With advertisers calling the tune so thoroughly, it is hard to see how television can properly utilize the many talented people it employs. Television could be a window on the world, but it is a mighty odd world it looks out on today, populated largely by cardboard figures from vapid situation comedies and noisy with the sound of guns and drumming hoofbeats. And cramming the so-called public service programs into the hours between ten in the morning and seven in the evening on Sunday is no answer at all.

No, we fear those who saw the Murrow leave of absence as a symbol of television's failure were right; furthermore, we have a rather strong suspicion that in their heart of hearts a good many people inside television agree with us.

DOLLARS FOR PEACE

CONGRESS WILL soon renew the perennial debate on the question of funds for foreign aid. At this writing, it seems likely that much of the opposition to President Eisenhower's proposals will concentrate on the question of waste and inefficiency. Considerable ammunition for such attacks was contained in a recent report on arms aid by a House watchdog subcommittee, and members of the group were reported, not surprisingly, disturbed and shocked at their findings.

Concern with waste and bad administration in the military aid program is eminently proper. Debate on this question, however, should not be allowed to obscure the basic issue. The tremendous gap between the underdeveloped nations and the West is at once an affront to the concept of international social justice and a serious threat to world peace. With these facts in mind, we wish all those who will debate on foreign aid would first consider some recent remarks by Paul G. Hoffman, one-time head of the Marshall Plan aid program and now managing director of the United Nations Special Fund.

The United States, Mr. Hoffman urged, should undertake a ten-year investment of thirty to forty billion dollars to advance the economy of underdeveloped countries. Granting that this seems "a huge sum," Mr. Hoffman said: "It isn't much when compared with our present rate of spending for defense, which in ten years would add up to four hundred and fifty billion dollars."

The sum Mr. Hoffman is proposing would double the amount currently scheduled for foreign economic aid, $1,400,000,000. The larger sum, in his eyes, is eminently justifiable as an "investment in peace." Its primary value for the U.S., as he sees it, would lie in dispelling "explosive unrest in those areas of the world where nearly two-thirds of the world's population have an annual per capita income of less than two hundred dollars." And Mr. Hoffman noted that if his investment in peace enabled this country to reduce its defense expenditures by only twenty per cent in future years, it would have paid for its cost twice over.

Half-way measures on aid do not achieve their purpose, Mr. Hoffman argued. If aid is given in an "inadequate dribble," there is no foreseeable end to the period when aid will be required. Instead, he urged funds for underdeveloped nations large enough for them to become self-sustaining, so that the need for aid will come to an end. "One of the reasons the Marshall Plan was a success in Europe," Mr. Hoffman pointed out, "is because the funds provided were adequate to the task."

To us, all of this makes good sense, even though the political climate these days does not seem overly favorable to such proposals. But a nation that can spend forty or forty-five billion dollars a year on defense should be able to spend a fraction of that as an investment in peace. And lest Mr. Hoffman's figures frighten legislators too much, it is worth remembering that the total he proposes for a ten-year period represents only twice what the country spends on tobacco and alcohol in the space of twelve months.

ADVICE, ANYONE?

WE LEARN in the pages of the New York *Herald Tribune* that a man who recently turned one hundred and two had some sage counsel to pass on. Asked to what he attributed his longevity, the venerable gentleman replied: "All I can advise a young man is that the less he has to do with women, the better." He did not amplify the comment, as the *Herald Tribune* remarked, but then he hardly needed to, did he?

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A U.N. Police Force?

Many people believe that the way to make the United Nations really effective is to create a standing force ready to check any threat to world peace

by ROBERT C. GOOD

IT WAS LONG after midnight, Friday, November 2, 1956, when Americans—at least those who were still at their radios—heard for the first time of the United Nations Peace Force. An indignant General Assembly had just called for a cease-fire in Egypt where Israeli troops were thundering into Sinai and Anglo-French forces were poised for the assault on Suez. After the vote had been counted, Canada's Foreign Minister, Lester Pearson, made his way to the rostrum. What was to happen, he said, even if there were a cease-fire and a withdrawal of forces? Was nothing to be done to stabilize this crackling frontier; was no action to be taken to prevent a recurrence of this tragedy six months hence? Why not create "a United Nations force large enough to keep these borders at peace while a political settlement is being worked out?"

Pearson's suggestion had more immediate significance too. While Britain and France privately hoped their invasion would topple Nasser, or at least push him toward an equitable settlement of the Canal dispute, their public explanations were cast very differently. They were intervening in Suez, they told the U.N., to contain the Israeli-Egyptian conflict, to protect the Canal, to separate the opponents, and to stabilize the area—in short, to be policemen for a world community which patently lacked police power. But what if the U.N. could produce a policeman? With little enthusiasm, but even less expectation that the U.N. could field a police force on such short notice, Britain and France indicated they would withdraw the moment an emergency U.N. force was ready to assume responsibility in the area.

Forty-eight hours after Lester Pearson's appeal, the U.N. force idea had been accepted in principle by the General Assembly, which in turn requested Secretary-General Hammarskjold, within the following forty-eight hours, to draft a workable plan for setting up the new U.N. Emergency Force (U.N.E.F.). This was the starting gun for an unprecedented diplomatic marathon. The Secretary-General's plan was delivered in twelve hours, and accepted. A more detailed policy statement was ready early November 6 and adopted the next day.

Mr. Hammarskjold was now a commander-in-chief with a plan and U.N. approval—but no troops. Nine days later, he had recruited troops (many more offers were received than could be used), established a staging area at Naples, located transportation (an American world-wide airlift was put together practically overnight), unraveled the snarled problems of logistics and equipment (U.S. helmet liners from Leghorn, Italy, were sprayed a U.N. blue for the new Emergency Force), and negotiated a Status of Forces agreement with Egypt which required great diplomatic tact.

On November 16, the Secretary-General landed at an Egyptian airfield. To the first contingent of U.N.E.F. troops, whose freshly painted blue helmets now bore the U.N. insignia, Mr. Hammarskjold said: "This is the first time in history that there is a truly international force. . . . I trust that such an example is a contribution to giving us one day a world order of which we may be truly proud."

NOW, OVER TWO years later, U.N.E.F. is still there—5,400 strong, representing eight countries and deployed along the invisible but volatile line, stretching one hundred seventy miles, which marks the boundary between Egypt and Israel. In his last report to the General Assembly, Mr. Hammarskjold was able to announce that "virtually unbroken quiet has prevailed along the entire line. . . ." Almost everyone is generous with his applause for U.N.E.F., including neutralist Asia: Burma expresses "appreciation"; India

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finds it "useful"; Indonesia has "wholeheartedly taken part in the undertaking." All three neutrals are paying part of the bill and Indian troops are today with U.N.E.F. in Egypt.

U.N.E.F.'s extraordinary success points directly to the question: why not make it permanent? Why not endow the U.N. with more than an "emergency" force dependent on year-to-year allocations from U.N. members, but a standing force ready, able and willing to jump the next time a frontier catches fire? Isn't this, at last, the way to make the U.N. really "effective"?

For Americans especially this has seemed an attractive possibility. Shortly after U.N.E.F. was established, John Foster Dulles told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee: "I would be glad to see, myself, some more or less permanent character given to . . . the United Nations Emergency Force." United World Federalists, always trying new keys in the lock which bars the way to "world order under law," eagerly grasped the U.N. peace force idea. The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace has sponsored an intensive investigation of the Peace Force idea by a much-respected U.N. correspondent backstopped by a panel of world affairs experts. And when President Eisenhower addressed the emergency special session of the General Assembly last August, he said he was sure that the then darkening crises in Lebanon and Jordan demonstrated "the need for such a force in being."

Months ago it became known that the Secretary-General's staff was preparing a thorough survey of the U.N.E.F. experience complete with recommendations for the future; many concluded that the hour to strike for a permanent peace force had come. But when Mr. Hammarskjold's report was released, it contained relative to a standing force neither prescription, nor blueprint, nor even a modest hint that such a force might be a good idea. Instead, he said, that it would be "without great practical value and certainly would not warrant the substantial sacrifices involved."

The high hopes of so many collapsed because these hopes had been based on two misunderstandings, the first relating to the nature of U.N.E.F. and the second to the nature of the U.N. itself.

U.N.E.F., contrary to much popular opinion, did not by military intervention create peace in 1956, and does not by military force keep the peace today. It is not an army nor perhaps even a police force in the full sense of either term. The fighting stopped in 1956 as a result of pressures which were brought to bear on Britain, France and Israel largely outside the U.N.—the pressure of the British Commonwealth countries; the stern disapproval of the United States; and the threat of the Soviet Union to turn a regional conflict into a world-wide crisis. U.N.E.F., explained the Secretary-General in his summary report, "is in no sense a military force exercising, through force of arms, even temporary control over the territory in which it is stationed."

MISUNDERSTANDINGS concerning U.N.E.F. are compounded when the nature of the U.N. itself is not clearly understood. The U.N. is not easy to understand partly because the present organization bears no real relationship to the blueprint drawn at San Francisco in 1945. According to that blueprint, the five great powers, including the Soviet Union, were given the constitutional authority to maintain the peace, by force if necessary, providing however that the five were in agreement. This was a kind of rudimentary, world-embracing government, the strong acting in concert to govern the less strong.

Today, the U.N. Charter is still there, not a word changed. But the U.N. itself has changed. The cold war intervened to make cooperation among the big five impossible. The Security Council, that agency through which the great powers were to exercise their authority, has weakened under the incessant drubbing of cold war vetoes. The General Assembly, a forum including all members of the world body but without authority to make binding decisions on any of them, has become the principal forum for U.N. political activity.

The enormous transition in the peace-enforcement function of the U.N. from the blueprint of 1945 to U.N.E.F. of 1956 may be set forth in a single, but not-so-simple, sentence: while the U.N. Charter provided for the enforcement of peace through the concerted action principally of the great powers whose consent alone was necessary to such action, U.N.E.F. by definition is limited to small powers, and depends not only on the consent of two-thirds of the voting members of the General Assembly, but upon the explicit consent of the host country and at least the implicit consent of *all* the parties to the dispute!

Because U.N.E.F. is a small force (it has never exceeded 6,000) made up of contingents from small nations (no other formula would have been acceptable), it cannot establish or maintain itself against organized military resistance. Because U.N.E.F. is the instrument of the General Assembly, a body with no constitutional authority to coerce, it cannot force consent to its operation; its operation must presuppose consent. Egypt's Dr. Mahmoud Fawze labored this point at U.N.E.F.'s founding: "Our clear understanding . . . is that this Force is in Egypt . . . to help Egypt, with Egypt's consent."

What then is U.N.E.F.? It is a tool, a device, for making less volatile any situation in which the disputants mutually desire to reduce the likelihood of violence. As one knowledgeable observer suggested, "Its role is merely one of assuring that what everyone wants to happen does happen." It is not an international army; it is an international burglar alarm. If

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triggered by attacks from one side or the other, the alarm will ring in the General Assembly. Its authority in the first instance is not the authority of force, but the authority of prestige—the prestige of those members of the Assembly whose affirmative vote brought U.N.E.F. into existence to begin with. "Its sole purpose," summarized Mr. Hammarskjold, "was to maintain quiet and prevent the recurrence of incidents." This is a modest role, but an extremely useful one. Why then, did the Secretary-General "veto" the effort to make U.N.E.F. a permanent U.N. fixture, a standing force, available for immediate use in some future crisis?

SEVERAL REASONS have been proffered by Mr. Hammarskjold. Though the U.N.E.F. experience was instructive it was also unique. The circumstances which made its deployment possible during the Suez debacle were not likely to be duplicated, as the crises last summer in Lebanon and Jordan illustrated. A "U.N.E.F." in Lebanon would have become embroiled in the internal conflicts of the nationals of the country since the situation took on the aspect of civil, rather than international, hostilities. A highly trained and mobile group of U.N. observers, however, was used to good advantage. For its part, Jordan would not hear of a U.N. force for fear it would joggle rather than stabilize her already unsteady position. Of course the Secretary-General did not rule out the possibility of future situations arising in which a U.N. force would again be useful. But he did emphasize that each situation probably would be distinctive enough to demand a tailor-made force, with skills, matériel and personnel all cut to the peculiar specifications of the situation once it arose.

Another problem was that of financing. Though its usefulness in stabilizing the Egyptian-Israeli frontier has been fully demonstrated, U.N.E.F. moves from one financial crisis to another. How much more difficult would it be to finance by voluntary contributions a similar force permanently organized, trained, equipped, ready to go—but who knows when and where?

The many technical difficulties clearly identified in the Secretary-General's report reflected perhaps an underlying political difficulty which could not be publicly identified—the fear of some states that this child of their ingenuity would somehow emerge like Frankenstein's monster to overwhelm its parent.

The response to U.N.E.F. has, in fact, been ambivalent. No one but the Communist bloc denies its usefulness; but many small states are uneasy concerning the precedent it represents. In the vote last November which extended U.N.E.F.'s life for another year, seventeen small nations abstained, including all the Arab countries. India, while faithfully if not enthusiastically supporting U.N.E.F., had serious reservations about its establishment during those hectic days in early November 1956. These reservations India has now transferred to the permanent force idea which it finds both "impractical" and "fraught with danger" and to which it therefore stands "irrevocably opposed."

There are strong emotional overtones to this attitude which India's Krishna Menon did not try to conceal from the General Assembly. "We could not consent to the taking of troops to the soil of other countries, even though they are United Nations troops—they are still foreign troops. It may be that some delegations may regard this as an excess of nationalism, but the experience of foreign troops on the soil of our land is too fresh for us to forget."

BENEATH THE overtones of emotion are the undertones of political concern. The Communists express it crudely, but some Asian states think they discover a kernel of truth within the husks of Communist propaganda. Once the imperialist powers had established a permanent U.N. force, said the Communist delegate from Bulgaria, "it would not be difficult for others deliberately to create such an atmosphere that the Governments of the smaller countries would be compelled to have United Nations troops on their territory." Though everyone agrees with Mr. Hammarskjold that a U.N. Force must not be "used so as to prejudge the solution of the controversial questions involved," some fear that the very existence of a standing force would make it difficult to resist its deployment, and once deployed the Force might be used as a lever to help alter the status quo.

In this connection it is significant that Pakistan has urged the establishment of a permanent force while India has resisted it. The explanation is Kashmir, concerning which sentiment in the U.N. has been running strongly in favor of Pakistan's position. Pakistan no doubt hopes, while India fears, that a permanent force might evolve into an instrument which indeed would be used "so as to prejudge the solution of the controversial questions involved." Both the fear and the hope may be ill-founded. But as long as they exist on the part of members anxious to enlist or resist the U.N.'s involvement in efforts to change the status quo, the permanent Peace Force is likely to remain only an idea.

Sensing the political climate and fully aware of the technical difficulties involved, the Secretary-General is strongly opposed to pressing for a permanent force at this time. But he has said that his office might well keep "the situation under constant review" and he has suggested that it might be useful to "take soundings" to determine which governments would be willing to contribute forces and under what circumstances. This should certainly be done for it would be a great pity if unpleasant realities were to cancel the future possibility, in appropriate circumstances, of turning again to the U.N.E.F. device.

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The labor movement is not something which can be isolated from the rest of American life

Labor's Wrongs—and Rights

by WILLIAM J. SMITH

ANYONE WHO STILL clings to the idea of the giant labor union or commercial corporation as merely a private organization is nurturing a myth. The impact of a powerful social organization on the public welfare deprives it of a right to complete autonomy, and, to the degree that it touches upon the public and common good, its functions and activities must be circumscribed by the social environment and circumstances in which it operates.

The current condition of the American labor movement has brought this problem to the fore within the last year or two. But the picture presented by the McClellan Committee investigation has exposed to view only one aspect of the whole. That corruption has wormed its slimy way into some sections of the labor movement is a fact. Yet the parade of unsavory witnesses before the klieg lights, with snatches of testimony widely publicized, has highlighted this phase of the subject out of all proportion to the whole. The sordid features of the picture should neither be minimized nor concealed. They exist. But to present this caricature as the image of organized labor is a distortion of the fact. Unions and corruption are not synonymous terms, and to attempt to identify the misdeeds of the minority with the good deeds of the majority is to do violence to justice.

No one class of our citizens has a monopoly on evil, a copyright on corruption or the exclusive rights to the ill effects which have fallen upon the human race because of original sin. And to draw the conclusion from the findings of the McClellan Committee investigation that the entire labor movement is tainted is simply a distortion of the law of logic. To infer further that the labor unions, and they alone, symbolize sin in American life is simply a surrender of reason.

The current criticism of the organized labor movement underlines a peculiar illogicality which has been characteristic of public opinion for a long time. We are predominantly an industrialized nation. Yet the American labor movement has never enjoyed the recognition and social acceptance to which it is rightfully entitled. The term "labor leader" has traditionally suffered a social stigma that is hard to explain and impossible to condone. An implied anathema is commonly associated with the term. Men and women in other ranks of life have often enjoyed a Horatio Alger halo as they rose from rags to riches or from obscurity to prominence. But when the subject under scrutiny is a union official, regardless of his rank or responsibility, society's evaluation is quite different.

Obviously, the public today has a right to scrutinize and evaluate the activities of the organized labor movement in America. There should not be, however, one standard of judgment for labor and another for individuals and groups who represent the various segments which comprise the whole of American society. The trade union movement is not something isolated, unrelated to the rest of American life, standing alone in solitary segregation. It is part of an organic cultural whole.

VIOLATIONS of ethical conduct, of course, may take noticeably crude forms when practiced by men in the rough-and-tough environment of union activity. But I doubt very much that these delinquencies are actually more malicious in degree or type than parallel practices in other areas of our national life. A case in point might be the alleged bribe scandal surrounding the natural gas bill of a couple of years ago. The odor of dubious morality was so strong here that the President indicated he would veto the bill on that score alone.

Senator McClellan, it will be remembered, was chairman of the committee assigned to investigate this scandal. And it would be difficult not to note the contrast between this earlier McClellan Committee investigation, which simply died a "natural death," and the current one on conditions in the labor movement.

Still, it must be affirmed that the investigation and hearings of the McClellan Committee have done a service both to the American people and to the trade union movement itself. It has its shortcomings, including noticeable displays of partisan politics, but it has brought to light gruesome details of conditions in some unions, the existence of which many suspected but few could have anticipated in depth.

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The situation in some instances is serious, and the public has a right to be disturbed about it. Whether the miscreants represent one per cent or five per cent or *X* per cent of the organized labor movement, symptoms of a cancerous growth have been detected. A quick and effective remedy must be found to check the malady.

Furthermore, it cannot be denied or disproved that for quite a number of years even good-intentioned leaders of labor in America looked the other way in the presence of corruption. Before the historic merger of the A.F.L. and the C.I.O., in December 1955, seldom would any union official ever raise his voice in protest against an abuse, no matter how flagrant or how harmful to the general welfare or to the movement itself. This tolerance of evil deepened into a dark night of corruption in certain areas. It is as simple as that. But this situation no longer prevails, and today the voice of honest trade unionism, expressed by A.F.L.-C.I.O. president George Meany, supported by a sympathetic Executive Council and strengthened by substantiated evidence from a Congressional Committee, can be heard condemning the renegades and taking direct and drastic action against them.

Moreover, when union corruption does set in, it is seldom that the racketeer carries on his nefarious business alone and unaided. The eighty-five thousand dollars which Dave Beck spent under the guiding hand of Nathan Shefferman (with his four hundred seventy-six management clients) revealed this. Perhaps the most cynical and ironical incident revealed in the course of the Committee hearings occurred when one of Mr. Shefferman's attorneys complained, "This Committee has put my client out of business."

A SECOND FACT about the labor movement which seems to cause concern to the public revolves around what anti-union critics call "the monopoly power of labor." "The unions have become too strong, too powerful," is a common complaint. "They are a threat to the common good. They should be cut down to size."

The first reaction to such a protest, it seems to me, should take the form of a question. "The unions are too strong, too powerful, in relation to what?" To the small, unfederated business man? Without doubt some International Unions dealing with an isolated entrepreneur can run roughshod over him and his enterprise. The private citizen in need of a repair job or engaged in a small building project can be economically mangled when put through the wringer of some of the craft unions' time schedules and wage scales, originally set up in negotiations with bigger contractors. These are problems which could engage the attention of trade union leaders at both the national and local level. Repeated often enough, the complaints of the small businessman on this point can become (and I am inclined to believe they are) a steadily spouting wellspring of anti-unionism.

The trade unions, however, did not originate the capitalistic economic system. They have been compelled to fit into and to follow the pattern of bargaining which they found in the market place. The giant union is, consequently, the direct and natural reaction to the giant corporation. At the present time we have sixty-eight such commercial and financial institutions, each of whose corporate assets run from one billion dollars at the lowest rung of the ladder to twenty billions at the top. The economic, social and political power of these, and other lesser giants, is all too evident. It seems just naive to talk about "cutting the unions down to size" while saying not a word about the accumulated power of the big unions' counterparts in industry.

And, strangely enough, it is not in the giant union-giant corporation areas of industrial relations that corruption, for the most part, has been found. One reason for that is the predominance of former C.I.O. unions in this field. When the C.I.O. was formed, in the late thirties, a break was made with many of the prevailing practices that had gone on for years, and the C.I.O. gave to a languid labor movement a needed "shot-in-the-arm." Cynics, of course, remark that "the C.I.O. is still too young to have become corrupted." Be that as it may, the fact is that the C.I.O. unions have ridden this wave of crisis with a pretty clean bill of health.

IN A DEMOCRACY such as we have in this country and within the framework of an economic system that has happily but haphazardly evolved from an original false premise to something resembling an ordered industrial life, trade union organizations are entitled to exercise economic, political and social power. The measuring rod is not what management may think is "good for labor," but the Common Good as it is reflected in the integrity and ability of labor's leaders and the legitimate strength derived from the social activities of its organized membership.

The day of Alexander Hamilton's dream of an America ruled over by financial and intellectual aristocrats has long since passed. As David Selekman puts it in a recent issue of Harvard *Business Review*, "One thing seems sure; they [employers] may as well face the fact that they will never again enjoy the opportunity for unilateral decision-making. That day is gone forever. They must count on continuous opposition—and hopefully as time goes by, on an intelligent, informed opposition—from labor unions, farmers, consumer groups, reformers and government agencies."

When and if the power possessed by labor unions is used to the detriment of the public welfare, whether it

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be in a large scale operation or in a thousand small ways or circumstances on the local level, it is clearly both the right and the duty of public authority to enforce corrective legislation. It would be a grave injustice, however, to attempt to restrict the political action of labor unions simply because labor's critics entertain an opposite political philosophy. It would be an equal injustice to attempt to restrict the economic power of labor unions simply to protect and expand a pre-usurped power held by the affiliates of organized management. Nor need one (to qualify as pro-American) accept the National Association of Manufacturers' philosophy of Individualism or the doctrinaire, antiquated economic theories of an "automatic economic system" still nurtured by some economists associated with the National Chamber of Commerce.

Labor unions must have power—economic, social and political power—if they are to carry out the social responsibilities that the very form of modern society places upon them. If the critics of the trade unions were to say "The craven, the immoral, the corrupt individual official must be rooted out of the American labor movement," no one could reasonably disagree with them. Power, any degree of power, in the hands of irresponsible and unscrupulous possessors of it, is certainly a danger and a threat. Nor can it be questioned that some union officials have at times indulged in an arbitrary use of possessed power. No excuse or defense should be made for the labor tyrant whether he carries a union card or cracks the whip over unorganized workers in a sweat shop. That is one thing. But to talk in terms of denying to organized workers their rightful exercise of economic, social and political power is something else.

The very concept of freedom which we cherish and the form of democracy which we endeavor to maintain give the public the right to demand that the social and civic freedoms of every rank and file member of a union be protected either by union self-discipline or by legislation. As consumers, the public has the right to insist that unions, employers and government fulfill a fundamental duty in working together constantly in an effort to find an answer to the so-called wage-price-profit spiral.

Conversely, what the citizens have not a right to is the judgment that lumps together the guilty and the honest leader and beats both to the ground with the same club. The public has no right to punish the majority for the misdeeds of a minority. The public, through its legislators, has no right to deprive workers of their legitimate collective bargaining strength by means of unjust, unwise and vindictive labor legislation.

And no one has the right to assume the only place you will find corruption in American life is in the labor movement. The unions should not be made the whipping boy for all the sins and weaknesses that run all through modern society.

THE YEAR OF JEREMIAH

CALL

Empty child of Anathoth,
What chance against impending night?
And with your empty hands,
What chance against almond trees
Hunched like these in the rutted ice?
Why gamble with the stealth
Of snow abandoned by the wind?
With frozen thorns, evasive paths,
And, then, the scrutiny of stars?

EXILE

In the soot of this Egyptian night,
I, the child of Anathoth, have cursed
The summer Nile's most velvet song,
Have cursed the mincing girls of Israel,
Who stamp white cakes for sterile Asherah
And splash libations in the street.
And in the parching gloom of Daphne
I have damned the witless men
Who flee the fire of Judah
To please their wives.
I, outcast goad of Benjamin,
Have cast them out
And blessed His rest
In Babylon.

RETURN

My tongue is reft of wish;
Brain dry of all lament
For covenanted blood poured
Out, hissing in the sand;
Heart rinsed of sourest terms
Chafed and stirred there for fall
Of temple, people, city gates.
And I am in a time of autumn caves,
Deeper than plummeting,
Than soft spiraling of love.
I am an autumn pit
That waits.

BROTHER FIDELIAN, F.S.C.

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IT ALL DEPENDS

MY FRIEND is a Protestant theologian. He can not agree that a Presidential candidate's religion should not be considered. What faith a man professes, my friend holds, is of course not the only thing about him that should be considered. That is the bigot's approach. But my friend can not go along with those who say that a candidate's religion is of no consequence. He would not vote for a Protestant candidate who might be counted on to throw his influence, in a biased way, against Roman Catholicism. Nor could he conscientiously support a Catholic who had no appreciation of America's religious pluralism. "I can think of some people in politics I would vote for, among other reasons, because they are Catholics, and others I would vote against because they are Catholics." It all depends. . . .

My friend realizes, as few others do, that Catholic political philosophers like Maritain, Rommen, Murray and Simon have developed a more comprehensive and conscientious approach to the modern pluralistic society than most of their contemporaries. He feels that one who is familiar with their work and has mastered their principles would, to that extent at least, be extraordinarily well equipped for public office. For these Catholic philosophers have a profound understanding of modern democracy, a grave respect for individual conscience and a lively appreciation for America's pluralism.

Paradoxically enough, although it is Catholicism which seems to be the cause of most concern in the pluralistic society of America, the best thinking about pluralism has been done by Catholics. I have concluded this after reading just about everything on the subject I can lay my hands on. This is due, I think, to another paradox: nowhere else is there a keener appreciation of the distinction between Church and State than in Catholic thought.

Do not misunderstand me. I do not mean to imply that the distinction between Church and State has been observed in Catholic history any better than it has in Protestant history. In both cases there have been entangling alliances. But in Catholic theory, if not in Catholic practice, the duality has always been respected. The Church has never been identified with the State. The separate realms have been kept distinct and the different natures, purposes and ends of each have been clarified. The Church has never been conceived of as "the State at prayer," nor have even the most sacral States assumed theocratic pretensions. In Catholic thought, the Church has ever been regarded as supranational, with ends transcending those of the State.

These distinctions, developed in the mists of history, have provided modern Catholic philosophers with a starting point from which to develop their theory of pluralism. There have been changes in Catholic thinking on the subject, due largely to a changed religious situation. But the modern notions of Church-State relationship were woven from ancient understandings.

Catholic thinking about the pluralistic society is still in its earliest stages. Nevertheless, in my opinion, it is far ahead of most other thinking. It does not conceive of the State in those crypto-theological terms which would, for instance, turn the First Amendment into an article of religious faith or sum up the American experience in the confident judgment that "secularism is the will of God." It does not fall into the liberal trap of equating religious tolerance with an indifference to theological truth—an equation which would limit freedom by turning indifferentism into the only proper religious attitude, relativism into the only moral attitude, and congregationalism into the one patriotically orthodox eccelesiology. Rather it centers its concern on the person and his freedom, as well as on the independence of all churches vis-à-vis the State.

Probably the most important contribution modern Catholic political thinking has made is to develop the distinction between good morals and good law. Morals and laws, in Catholic thinking, are not indentified, nor is there any simple transference from one to the other. Because a thing is immoral does not mean that it is, or even should be, illegal; by the same token, the illegal is not *ipso facto* immoral.

The Catholic does not of course believe that man is a law unto himself; he believes that an individual's conscience must be related to an objective moral standard outside itself. He is indifferent to the sign hanging over a theatre marquee: "The Supreme Court says you may see it!" On the other hand, it is not enough to tell him a thing is immoral for him to conclude there ought to be a law. For many good reasons perhaps there ought not to be a law. Perhaps such a law would not be sufficiently related to the purpose of all positive, civil law, which purpose is limited to the comparatively modest end of the civil community.

The whole controversy about a Catholic for President will raise issues which the best political philosophers in the Church have been discussing for years, and discussing brilliantly. All the evidence indicates that these men were ahead of their time and have made a more positive contribution to democratic theory than they are usually credited with. A Catholic candidate—or, indeed, any other candidate—who had mastered their work would be that much ahead.

JOHN COGLEY.

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A report on Canada's bomb-throwing, clothes-shedding Doukhobors

"Sons of Freedom"

by J. E. BELLIVEAU

NO GROUP of people in all Canadian history has given the authorities so much trouble as the "Sons of Freedom," a strange, fanatical branch of the Russian Doukhobor cult. These torch-bearing, bomb-throwing, clothes-shedding religious demonstrators have in the past quarter-century alone wrought an estimated ten million dollars' worth of physical damage on Canada's Pacific Coast. Their eruptions into anarchy have been the source of endless governmental grief, including an agonized examination of official conscience about the necessity of confining Freedomite children in a kind of benevolent concentration camp. And, needless to say, the entire Freedomite affair has provided ready material for Soviet propagandists to use against the West.

To understand the Doukhobors and their sects it is necessary to go back one hundred and fifty years, when the Doukhobors in Russia split away from the Greek Orthodox church. They had developed the belief that since all people are children of God and equals, they were therefore subject to no higher earthly authority than themselves. They believed that God dwells in the souls of men and that Christ possessed the greatest share of this in-dwelling divinity. From that they moved on to the idea that God manifests Himself in certain other human beings who were the successors to and the equals of Christ. These beings the sect chose as their spiritual leaders. Soon the Doukhobors began destroying ikons of the Orthodox church, maintaining that images were idols.

As their beliefs developed, members of the sect announced their rejection of the Holy Trinity, which led to the name "Doukhobortzy." The name implies those who wrestle against the Holy Spirit.

As might be imagined, the new cult was not looked upon with favor by other Russians. Consequently, after decades of difficulty, and when the Canadian West was opening up to general settlement, some twelve thousand Doukhobors, of whom the Sons of Freedom formed only a small faction, applied for admission to the country. They came in 1889, seeking freedom from wars, freedom to practice their religion and freedom from oppression of any kind. Ten thousand "orthodox" Doukhobors who have descended from this number have built prosperous farms and have lived generally in peace on the prairies and in British Columbia. They suffer the embarrassment of their violent and incendiary brethren in the Freedomite sect. This major group would not be likely to return to Russia, or even think about it seriously. The other few thousands —the Sons of Freedom—at first appeared to want to, but they are notably hesitant now.

FOR THE FIRST decades of the Freedomites' residence in Canada, there was only sporadic difficulty. Now and again the sons, and daughters, sought to dramatize their causes by public nudity. For this and other misdemeanors they would occasionally be carted off to jail, where they would again parade their nudity as a protest. Here and there a bombing or burning outrage occurred. But the seriousness of their anarchy grew steadily with the years, and now, for the last fifty years, the Sons of Freedom have been a deep-driven thorn in the flesh of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the government.

When the Doukhobors first arrived in Canada, the government promised the Russian newcomers that their objection to bearing arms would be respected. They were told that they could wrestle with the Holy Spirit without interference, but they would be expected to abide by the ordinary laws of the land.

At first there were no serious troubles, but as time went on the Sons of Freedom refused to register births, deaths or marriages. They refused to be naturalized as citizens; they refused to send their children to school; and, finally, they refused to pay taxes. (It is interesting that, while they do not pay taxes, the Freedomites have no hesitation in applying for old-age pensions.) Their favored method of protesting against schooling was to put the torch to schoolhouses, and in the last forty years fifty schools have been burned.

Later came reports of wife-sharing and spouse-switching in the Freedomite "spiritual home," then under the direction of Michael (the Archangel) Verigin, the leader, and his secretary, Joe Podovinikoff. This was in the town of Krestova, B.C. Outbreaks

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multiplied, until, in 1950, a total of seven hundred and ninety-three years in prisons was imposed on one hundred and ninety-five Sons, for arson; conspiracy to burn; conspiracy to destroy Canadian Pacific Railway tracks; bombing railroad bridges; conspiracy to burn schools, churches and halls; for seditious conspiracy; for riotous assembly; and for nudism.

An end to this violence was seen when Stefan Sorokin, an itinerant missionary from Europe, arrived in Canada as a displaced person in the same year. He asked to be sent to people of his own tongue and took over as their leader soon after reaching Krestova. To the Doukhobors, he come as a messenger from God. At his bidding, they swore they would neither bomb nor burn, nor would they shed their raiment.

It wasn't long, however, before Mr. Sorokin left the large and comfortable home prepared for him. Two years later, he and two aides left for Uruguay with ninety-four thousand dollars raised from the community to seek and purchase land for Sons of Freedom settlements. Other than a few cables of reassurance, this was the last of Mr. Sorokin or his assistants, or the ninety-four thousand dollars.

Three years later, at an Easter celebration, things were orderly until John Perepelkin, the speaker, read a letter declaring Sorokin still the acknowledged leader of the Sons of Freedom. Six boys and girls displaying banners turned up at this moment, which was a signal for a nudist group to fall upon the banner-bearers and tear the standards to shreds. Perepelkin had asked the Doukhobors to bow when the banners were displayed, and this started the battle. The people refused to bow down to idols, they said, and the banners were idols. The riot went on for some time and, later, incendiary retaliation followed.

This in turn brought a fourteen-year prison term to Freedomite Paul Popoff, found guilty of setting fire to a forty-five thousand dollar planer mill and a Doukhobor community hall. Other terrorists struck in the darkness that same night and burned sixteen more buildings in Krestova, Goose Creek, Appendale, Winlaw and Perry's Siding. Non-Doukhobors asked for the militia to guard their property, but it never came.

SO IT HAS gone on for years, the pattern changing slightly from time to time and place to place. No one could offer a real solution. Sending the Freedomites to jail didn't make any difference. Once the parents of children who were not permitted to attend school were sent to Okalla Prison in Vancouver, and it was then, in 1953, that their children were taken to the dormitory school in New Denver. Somebody had to care for the children, some of whom were in their late teen years and had never attended school. But in retaliation for their children's sanctuary the Freedom folk proceeded to burn thirteen of their own homes in a single night. Invariably, prison sentences to some of the sect has meant more violence by others.

Much of Canada's recently intensified Doukhobor headache arises out of the dormitory school, where the children are kept behind fences and required to attend school. Freedomite parents may come and visit, and they do so, but they refuse to enter the compound, which is quite comfortable and where the children are extremely well cared for. Thus pictures have been published showing parents talking with and kissing their children through the wire fence. The unhappy impression has been given that the parents may not get any closer to their offspring.

Indeed, the whole thing is an affront to almost all Canadians, but nobody can think of a better way to protect the young. Their parents, whose whole way of living threatens the safety and well-being of the society at large, have been convicted, at least, of contributing to juvenile delinquency. In the school the children have shelter and food and they have schooling and preparation for a civilized existence.

The government's guardianship of the one hundred and four children in the dormitory school has inevitably brought complaints of persecution, child theft and similar charges from the Soviets. The Russian propaganda mills ground swiftly, exploiting to the hilt the "persecution" of the Russian descendants in Canada.

The Russians are canny enough to appreciate the propaganda value in offering the Sons extensive sympathy. But it does not appear that they would like the present generation's returning to the U.S.S.R. to carry on their "spiritual" activities of firing, disrobing and bombing. Not unexpectedly, Sons of Freedom have themselves admitted that Soviet agents have worked in their midst, encouraging acts of terrorism and fomenting discontent.

Thus the request of the Sons last year to be permitted to renounce Canadian citizenship and move on to Russia looked to be a happy way out, and there was appropriate cheering in official circles. The Freedomites asked the federal authorities to give them one-way transportation and funds to reestablish themselves in the Barnaul area of southwestern Siberia. Snapping at a chance to unload their problem, the governments of Canada and British Columbia agreed to pay from a million and a half to two million dollars to complete the happy repatriation. To see the last of the Sons of Freedom, the governments would gladly pay the money, with some conditions attached, if only the move were concluded with positive finality. And they would consider it a great bargain.

The provisions of the offer were these: That the members of the sect renounce their Canadian citizenship (those born in Canada acquired it automatically); that they produce documentary proof that a ship is char-

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tered to take them from Vancouver to Vladivostok; that they produce documentary evidence of the Soviets' willingness to accept them; that they produce a tabulation of the exact cost of transportation and relocation in the appointed region.

A Doukhobor delegation visited the U.S.S.R., and received expressions of sympathy and welcome from no less a person than Klementi E. Voroshilov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet. The group then indicated its willingness to go at once, since their living conditions—they said—had become unbearable. Concrete steps towards migration were begun; registration lists were compiled, and other processes were said to be moving to completion. This was many months ago, however, and the processes are still going on.

THE DATE FOR the renunciation of citizenship, to qualify for financial assistance, was set as October 21, 1958. But by that time, the sect leaders hadn't produced the signatures, and the deadline was extended to November 15. At the end of October, only about forty application forms had been received.

Furthermore, the Soviet Union has never said clearly that the Doukhobors would be accepted by the U.S.S.R., and the conviction has grown that the Sons' repatriation plan was a thing made out of whole cloth from the very beginning. Even Bill Moojelsky, the man who led the original reconnaissance party to Siberia, failed to make application to go there permanently.

Besides, the Sons of Freedom have now said there is a conspiracy to make them stay in Canada, though none of them explains any more about the allegation. No one outside the movement in Canada can dream of a good reason for keeping them around. Never was a departure so hopefully desired.

Professor W. G. Dixon, of the University of British Columbia, has an explanation of the contradictions which puzzle the authorities. He believes the sect achieves its chief psychological satisfaction from a continuing conflict with the larger Canadian community. It will not, he maintains, yield that satisfaction to go to a land where an urge for open conflict sometimes brings an abrupt response, a response from which there is no appeal. This social scientist thinks, and so do many others, that British Columbia is stuck with the Freedomites for all time and just has to make the best of things. It must hope that the next generation, especially those kept in school, will have different ideas.

Whatever happens, Canada anticipates that the Russians will weep openly and profusely at the vicious Canadian plot to refuse these poor people a chance of sailing to Vladivostok. Actually, it seems clear that the Communists want no part of the Freedomites. It would be possible, of course, to shoot them if they continued their recalcitrance in the U.S.S.R. But that would be poor propaganda.

THE SCREEN

NEVER STEAL ANYTHING RADIOACTIVE

THAT YOU don't have to have a million dollars to make a good movie is evidenced by a couple of quickie-films turned out by Irving Lerner, an experienced documentary film maker. Good, inexpensive movies have been made by bright directors before, of course, but lately, what with mounting costs, these have been few. Lerner's two pictures, therefore, both produced by Leon Chooluck on budgets of around one hundred thousand dollars each, are particularly noteworthy—and not only for their capable casts, intelligent use of camera, music and sparse script, but also for being thrillers that don't talk down to audiences.

In telling the story of a convict who escapes from San Quentin and keeps the Los Angeles police on edge because the cannister he's carrying contains not a million dollars worth of heroin, as the convict thinks, but dangerously radioactive cobalt 60, "City of Fear" builds up tremendous suspense. In large part this achievement is due to director Lerner's skillful use of visuals and to a sound track that assists in dialogue, music and sound effects but never detracts from what we see.

The plot of "City of Fear" is simple enough: when the police discover that the escaped convict with his deadly cannister is in Los Angeles, they must apprehend him before the cobalt 60 contaminates him or anyone with whom he comes in contact. Their problem is made more difficult by the fact that they cannot broadcast an alarm about the contents of the cannister, lest they throw all of Los Angeles into panic as well as let the criminal know what a potentially powerful weapon he has. Step-by-step, Lerner shows us the convict, planning, hiding and fleeing throughout the city with his terrible, though innocent-looking, container while the methodical and frustrated police continue in hot pursuit. Vince Edwards plays the desperate criminal with an effective combination of diabolic cunning and animal brutality that waver when radiation sickness sets in. The supporting cast is also good. "City of Fear" has no pretensions to being a world beater, but it is a well-made thriller that merits attention.

CINEMATICALLY, the other low-budget picture produced by Leon Chooluck and directed by Irving Lerner is also fascinating. Once again Vince Edwards plays the lead, and plays it well. As a cool, calculating, paid killer in "Murder by Contract," Edwards is deliberate and careful as he goes about his first few jobs—almost in the manner of some of those cheerful English crime comedies with Alec Guinness. In spite of its occasional humorous touches, however,

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"Murder by Contract" is not a comedy but a serious study of a seemingly-conscienceless killer. Again this is a skillfully made movie, but what Mr. Lerner forgets this time, I fear, is that the viewer has to identify himself with some of the characters in a film. Since practically all the people in this story, even the intended victim who proves the killer's downfall, are on the side of evil, there is no audience identification. Furthermore, the film never successfully explains the leading character or why he lives and behaves as he does or the real reason for his being caught with his ruthlessness down. Now that Irving Lerner has proved his success with cinema form, it is to be hoped that in the future he will also pay more attention to matter. In any case, neither of his two feature films is a waste of your time.

IT WOULD BE interesting to see what Lerner could do with a film about the great open spaces like "These Thousand Hills." What was done with it by Producer David Weisbart and Director Richard Fleischer is sad. Starting with a fairly good story by A. B. Guthrie, Jr., beautiful Technicolor shots of 1880 Oregon, and even some effective use of CinemaScope whose enormous screen looks fine when filled with cattle, the film dissipates most of its advantages and fiddles around with rather uninteresting characters.

The members of the cast don't help much; most of them seem not to have been briefed on what the whole thing's about, and they amble through their roles: Don Murray as a cowhand who's determined to be a big rancher; Lee Remick as a dance-hall floozy who loves him, loans him money and helps him until he drops her like a hot penny; Patricia Owens as the banker's niece who marries him; Albert Dekker as the banker mainly interested in Dan's respectability; Richard Egan as the villain of the piece whose villainy is practically unmotivated. The most promising character is nicely played by Stuart Whitman, who starts out as Don's close pal and partner but goes to the dogs when ungrateful Don becomes stuffy and high-hat. All in all, it seems a shame to clutter up these thousand hills with such dull people.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

THE STAGE

PERSONAL DISTINCTION

MR. LEONARD SPIGELGASS' comedy of mature sentiment brings to the season an accustomed Oriental soy sauce, but beyond this, a flavor of grace as welcome as it is uncommon. "A Majority of One" is something in the nature of a happy anomaly: one never doubts, that is, its commercial impulse and genesis in contrivance; the rituals of liberal piety it pauses intermittently to honor, and its imposition on all one's powers of fantasy. Still, these elements, elsewhere the wreckage of more ambitious theater occasions, are blended here into a certain pressure of decorum, which gives the play's wit solidity and a coloring of human animation—pleasures not to be declined amid the sorrows and *longueurs* of our outcast comic state.

That all this should be so is something due to Mr. Spigelgass' intricately attuned ear, so persuasive in its recording of dialect and speech rhythms too frequently guyed. Much is owing to the discreet *japonaiserie,* shall we say, of Sir Cedric Hardwicke's performance, with its reticence and guileful mimicry. Yet most, doubtless, is the part of Mrs. Gertrude Berg, whose quality of personal distinction has the lustre and repose of all things singular by their goodness. Mrs. Berg has had the fortune of time—some thirty-odd years—to labor at this *persona* of Jewish maternity, and its precision of outline, the security of knowledge, judgment and legitimate calculation displayed within its chosen scheme, are wondrous to behold. It is an image old in racial wisdom and experience that Mrs. Berg projects, and its authority of identity, at this moment of flux and disorder of personality, is a human and moral, not to say esthetic, fact of unique virtue. *(At the Shubert.)*

RICHARD HAYES.

COMMUNICATIONS

"THE EXPANSION OF CHRISTIANITY"

Philadelphia, Pa.

TO THE EDITORS: It seems to be the fate of Christopher Dawson to encounter in the "Communications" columns of The Commonweal a series of correspondents who are more intent on controversy than on comprehension. The abusive characterization (e.g. "This is utter nonsense") bestowed upon Mr. Dawson's most recent article by a correspondent in the Feb. 13 issue certainly seems designed to generate heat rather than light upon the matter at issue.

With regard to the specific point upon which Mr. Irwin St. John Tucker challenged Professor Dawson, that "Christianity is an Occidental religion" (these are Mr. Tucker's words, not Mr. Dawson's) and that Asia is a foreigin field to Christianity, the following facts should be noted:

(1) Mr. Dawson wrote, "For twelve centuries Christianity has been the religion of a culture—that is to say, it has had an organic relation with the social and moral structure of one particular society of peoples." Now regardless of what Christianity has done in the past

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or may do in the future, this is simply the statement of a recognized historical fact. Mr. Tucker's appeal to the early centuries of the Church is quite irrelevant to this fact, for Mr. Dawson did *not* write "for the last *twenty* centuries," but rather for the last *twelve,* that is, since the rise of Islam in the seventh and eighth centuries detached Africa and Western Asia from the body of Christendom.

(2) One of Professor Dawson's most frequently stated ideas has been that Christianity is a universal religion, which in its basic character transcends the cultures of both East and West. This was the theme of his paper before the World Congress of the Lay Apostolate in Rome in 1957, and it was stated in the following terms in *Christianity and the New Age* back in 1931: "Thus Catholic Christianity occupies an intermediate position between the two spiritual ideals and the two conceptions of reality which have divided the civilized world and the experience of humanity. To the West its ideals appear mystical and other-worldly, while in comparison with the Oriental religions it stands for historical reality and moral activity. . . . Yet by reason of this ambiguous position the Catholic Church stands as the one mediator between East and West." This chapter, by the way, was reprinted in *The Dynamics of World History,* the synthesis of Mr. Dawson's thought published in 1957.

(3) Professor Dawson does believe that Christianity has had a more profound effect upon Western culture than upon Byzantine or Oriental culture. For it was able to form Western culture from the latter's very beginnings, while in the case of the East it has entered into societies already past the formative stage of their development. As a result, Christianity has communicated a dynamism to Western culture which has not been evident in its relationship with the cultures of the Orient.

Professor Dawson's thought on religion and culture recognizes the complex character of historical reality and does not lend itself to the oversimplifications to which its critics all too readily wish to subject it. Those who approach his thought with preconceptions which they do not care to correct or verify by a closer reading of the body of his work do a grave injustice to Mr. Dawson, but even more so to themselves, if they wish to understand the real nature of the challenges with which Christianity is confronted in the intercultural world of the present day. J. J. MULLOY.

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Rilke's Dual Affirmation of Life and Death

THE LETTERS OF RAINER MARIA RILKE AND PRINCESS MARIE VON THURN UND TAXIS. Translated by Nora Wydenbruck. New Directions. $5.50

RAINER MARIA RILKE: THE RING OF FORMS. By Frank Wood. University of Minnesota Press. $4.50.

By BERNARD MURCHLAND

RILKE NEVER doubted that death was the better side of life. Its presence flutters through his works as a fulfilling mystery, a dramatic *point d'appui,* the final desideratum of all things—imperiling the meaning of all that is finite, visible and perishable. "Earth, isn't this what you want: an invisible re-arising in us? Is not your dream to be one day invisible?" Rilke asks in his Ninth Elegy. And this passage from *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* is typical of his deepest thinking on the subject of death: "Who cares anything today for a finely-wrought death? No one. Even the rich, who could after all afford the luxury of dying in full detail, are beginning to be careless and indifferent; the wish to have a death of one's own is growing even rarer. A while yet, and it will be just as rare as a life of one's own."

It comes therefore as something of a surprise to learn in these new letters (extending from 1909 until the poet's death in 1926) that Rilke faced his own death with little sense of expert workmanship. Appended to this volume is a document of touching revelation, a letter from Dr. Haemmerli, who cared for the dying poet in Switzerland. "His only wish was not to see anybody who might make him realize the seriousness of his condition," wrote the doctor, "which he purposely concealed from himself . . . . the only way of relieving him in his terrible situation was to maintain, right to the end, his serene belief that he would get well." And the Doctor added: "His attitude in this matter was quite illogical."

Upon deeper consideration, perhaps it was not so illogical. All of Rilke's work is an art of darkness and inconclusion. He courageously assumed the burden of men's life into his solitude and he found it almost unbearable. He sought the meaning of the moment and found the moment to be absence. In an unpublished letter to a friend he expressed this agony in these words: "How is it possible to live when the fundamentals of this life are so completely incomprehensible? When we are always inadequate in love, wavering in our determination and *impotent in the face of death,* how is it possible to exist." (Emphasis added.) Rilke's own impotence before death is in line with his struggle with the ambiguity and impossibility of life. The dual affirmation of life and death in his *Elegies,* for example, goes hand in hand with a dual negation of the same realities. Rilke's artistic genius operated in a kind of void between these two extremes without ever attaining either fully. This, I think, largely explains the great energy and insight of his work.

There is much in these letters to support such a view. Rilke and the Princess hit it off immediately. She wrote him a note in Paris asking for an interview. Rilke obliged "imperiously and urgently" and thus did their strange relationship begin. One would like to know more about the character of the Princess. She was obviously a woman of great intellect, charm and humor. And it is quite conceivable that without her sustaining interest in him. Rilke would never have survived the critical years from 1910-19 or written the *Duino Elegies.* She contained him admirably.

Most of these letters are chit-chatty items arranging meetings, expressing gratitude for mutual favors, and discussing friends they had in common. But the informal dialogue builds into a more or less complete pattern that enables us to see the personality of the poet in new light and depth. Many of his letters have a whining, discouraged tone. ("I tell you, Princess, things must change with me, from the very foundation, otherwise all the wonders of the world will be in vain.") Others reveal a profound vision of life's limitations. ("It is ludicrous to continue bungling at love, being a little happy, never unhappy enough and on top of it all to live through time that has already been used up . . . before it has begun." Or: "Shall we not always postpone any attempt at understanding, look upon everything human as an insoluble riddle, regard history as a primeval forest the ground of which we can never reach because it lies under strata upon strata of fallen trees, an apparition riding on the back of destruction.")

Rilke suffered a defect of inner vision that rendered him incapable of getting used to life. And under the brutal demands of his partial blindness he lived, travelled, suffered, created, and died. Thus, too, did he hope. In Rilke the thesis that despair is the creative basis of hope finds ample substantiation. His rare vision—so riddled with mystery, longing, and melancholy—is ultimately reducible to the great miracle in the world that "all life is lived." A particularly fine passage in these letters, written in the period of his dark night, strengthens our belief in his essential hope. "After all," he says, "it is good to have lived on earth with a good will, even though it may have been uncertainly, guiltily, not at all heroically—in the end one will be wonderfully prepared for divine circumstances."

Passing from the warm fluidity of Rilke's own pen to the brittle prose of Professor Wood's textual-ideological study of the poet is, to say the least, to experience a totally different literary climate. Yet it is refreshing enough in its own right. Professor Wood justifies a new critical study on the grounds of establishing the "one Rilke" against

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the "many Rilkes" critics heretofore have spawned. Today, he argues, "there seems no reason not to accept the whole output, from beginning to end, as thoroughly interrelated and interdependent, the organic expression of an extremely homogeneous mind."

Mr. Wood is indubitably right in his contention that the many Rilkes are actually one. And his comprehensive analysis of themes and motifs in the poet's work—from the early efforts through to the *Sonnets of Orpheus*—goes far in demonstrating the unity thesis. Mr. Wood scores critically time and again, and his obvious familiarity with Rilkean literature (and there are mountains of it) as well as the original works enables him to knit an admirable critical garment about the poet's disconcerting metaphors, symbols, paradoxes and visions.

Yet I fear it is a garment too closely knit. Rilke maintained that one of the essential attributes of the poet was "space around his feelings." Wood gives considerable attention to the space theme. But in the end, one feels, he does not grasp the importance that "space" must play in even a work of criticism on Rilke. Perhaps this is because the critic finds it difficult to respect sufficiently the element of ambiguity in the poet. Perhaps, too, Mr. Wood's method leads him to reduce Rilke's ontological vision. He was eminently a poet in search of the meaning of the world.

There can be no doubt that both the esthetic dimension and the metaphysical are part of Rilke's poetry. But the latter, I think, must have priority. Otherwise the immense effort of so much genius makes a good deal less sense. Late in his book, Mr. Wood makes this statement: Rilke's "problem is essentially of a linguistic rather than metaphysical nature, to be solved by the transformation of the idea through language into what has been called 'absolute art,' a kind of 'miracle of transubstantiation' effected by the language process itself." Such a view must be opposed quite categorically. I am not, of course, saying that a pat theological treatise can be drawn from Rilke's poetic work. Nor am I attempting to make of him an orthodox figure. He was a bitter critic of orthodoxy —especially Christian orthodoxy.

What I am saying is that Rilke's vision was rooted in the mystery of inwardness and transcendence, that is to say, in metaphysical values. His angel of the *Elegies* is in no sense of the word a "Thomistic" angel, but neither was it a mere esthetic device. His Orpheus was not precisely a religious god; but neither was he merely an artist-god. They were both symbols, of high revelatory content, to carry man's being one step further in the direction of love, which Rilke defined as God. In his *Selected Letters* there is this important passage: "It belongs to the original tendencies of my nature to accept the Mysterious *as such,* not as something to be exposed, but as the Mystery that is mysterious to its very depths and is so everywhere. . . ." There is in such receptivity a form of creation that transcends art. And it is a vital clue, I believe, to the meaning of Rilke's work. He was too good a poet to admit that art could solve the radical dilemmas of life.

Behan's Book

BORSTAL BOY. By Brendan Behan. Knopf. $4.50.

By THOMAS F. CURLEY

HERE'S a book by Behan about himself before he grew older and fatter. It's about his first stay in an English prison, a Borstal being a prison for offenders between sixteen and twenty-one years of age, which information I take from the glossary in the back of the book. This is not, of course, a novel. Behan uses the first person all the way through and he means himself. Is it all true, then? Every bit of it and if you doubt it you'll have to quarrel with the author.

There was Behan, a young scholar of sixteen, sojourning in Liverpool with a suitcase full of explosives when his landlady shouted up the stairs that there were gentlemen to see him. It was the police and they got to him before he could get either himself or the explosives out the window. What did he have to say for himself?

"My name is Brendan Behan. I came over here to fight for the Irish Workers' and Small Farmers' Republic, for a full and free life, for my countrymen, North and South, and for the removal of the baneful influence of British Imperialism from Irish affairs. God save Ireland."

Behan tells us that his statement would delight the left wing element in the I.R.A. The statement may have; *Borstal Boy* will probably not. It is both too realistic and good-humored to please a revolutionary. Not that Behan doesn't suffer as a result of his I.R.A. affiliation. He is cuffed around a bit and, soon after imprisonment, is excommunicated because he refuses to recant. When he sasses the priest and even goes so far as to instruct him in Irish history, he is beaten up by the guards. All in all, however, he was treated fairly well and he's the first to admit it.

Take the matter of excommunication. Behan expresses intense dislike for the priest who refused him the sacraments but when he was transferred from Walton prison to the Borstal, he continued to attend services every chance he got (it helps to pass the time, he says), and even served Mass when given the opportunity. A genuine revolutionary would cherish his resentment and make capital out of the incident when he took up the pen to fight his enemies.

What makes *Borstal Boy* enjoyable is that Behan is not fighting anyone, not even himself. The older man remembers that he enjoyed his food and the cigarets he had, that many of the guards were gentlemen and that, in general, life in prison has its good points. Behan's is not a great mind and he is not possessed of nobility of character; this is not to say that he is banal or vicious. He is that rare thing in literature today— an ordinary man who writes with gusto.

Well, not altogether ordinary come to think of it. He knows a

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great deal of history for a young man, his mother worked in Maud Gonne's house and his uncle was in the I.R.B. with Yeats. His chief talent, however, was in his keeping and making peace among his fellow prisoners. Towards the end of the book, Behan reveals a true genius along this line and I couldn't help thinking that even though he was excommunicated he practiced the seventh beatitude with uncommon success.

One could take this book much more seriously than I have. It might even be argued that the comic Irishman is a stereotype and that it ought to be condemned always and everywhere. That may be, but another image of the Irishman has become a stereotype in recent years: that of Stephen Dedalus, mooning about Dublin with his inwit clawing him. Behan is a good antidote. And what is more important, a cloudy forehead and some earnest profundities do not add up to seriousness. "An emotional man," Miss Constance Rourke has reminded us, "may possess no humor, but a humorous man usually has deep pockets of emotion, sometimes tucked away or forgotten."

Nobody can read *Borstal Boy* and doubt that Behan is a humorous man. *Borstal Boy* is not going to change the world but if you have time to relax you might pick it up and have an amusing night or two. And at the author's expense, if you wish—but at your peril.

First Commitments

THE NIGHT OF THE HAMMER. By Ned O'Gorman. Harcourt Brace. $3.75.

By ROSEMARY F. DEEN

MOST FIRST books of poetry contain treasures of sensibility but are rather vague as to line and direction. Ned O'Gorman's *Night of the Hammer* subjects a rich sensibility to human uses and so provides it with control and structure. The technical control of the great rhetoric shows in the strong music of the lines. The various developments of recurrent themes in the poetry show the coherence of purpose served by the rich sense experience: "the voyages took by the eye" begin in "the disputation of the will."

One of the dominant themes is a consideration of beginnings ("I've told you again and again/how the world began."). Geological beginnings and childhood are frequent images expressing the freshness and fatality of genesis. "An Incident Early in the World's History" (the murder of Abel) occurred when "The world/had just begun to set its course; the sun rose/daily in a certain place, the hills were/not fluid, nor rocks shivered in the heat." In the beginning courses are set, and the end is hidden as surely in the beginning as, in the winter tree, the apples "clamber in the branch/all pulse and undiscovered." "An Art of Poetry" connects this dominant concern with genesis with the creation of poetry:

> The advantage of the line is
> direction
> to the generate point
> where torrid with gesture
> it swerves upon itself
> and builds the primitive arc,
> deranged center, wrought
> circle.

Mr. O'Gorman has a genius for hyperbole which savors of the mock heroic. The most remarkable poem in the book, called "Myth," is about "a man with a terrible obsession/who thought that he was fire":

> cypresses curled like shavings
> at his touch;
> roots yielded up their syrups
> and the sun
> rocked in the oven of his eye.
> . . . . . .
> . . . . . O terrible this
> booted colossus
> this hooting flame who saw all
> the world
> in his obsession and made it do
> for tinder, flint
> and furnace. Hulking in the
> sun, rattling
> among poppies he contended
> for dominion
> in the flaring orbit of his
> terrible obsession.

"On Saint Theresa's Difficulty in Keeping Her Feet on the Ground" echoes with the violence following the saint's resistance to her ecstatic rising. But, as in "Myth," the violence is seen as disorder. When she yields, "No more riot/balked her rising up. In the quiet/of halls of nunnery they saw/their mother floating grandly through the door." A poem describing the sea begins, "There is no reason in it./It is known by extravagance." But in Mr. O'Gorman's poetry extravagance is known by reason. If it were not, it would destroy, because only control can play off exuberance. The extravagant rhetoric is like a kite—a favorite image—which soars but is tied and related. Stillness directs by a subtler energy:

> the middle-of-words are fixed
> to a kite and are reachless;
> though alternate and charged
> the poles are still. . . .

But I feel the same embarrassment in trying to suggest the variety of this book that Mr. O'Gorman felt about the sea, describing it for someone who had never seen it. He had to end by blurting out, "I te'l you, travel to it!"

It is natural to find influences of other poets. Some work better than others, however—not because they are better poets but because, for Mr. O'Gorman, their influence is general and can be turned to new uses. So Wallace Stevens teaches how to make rhetoric serve the construction of myth. The temptation of Mr. Stevens' manner remains evident in this book, but it does no damage. Marianne Moore too is all for the good with her example of being "responsive and responsible." Mr. O'Gorman's book like hers is almost a bestiary, though his animals are less rare and more violent. But Hart Crane has blighted a patch or two of syntax into awkwardness, and Emily Dickinson has taken charge of the last lines of two poems with her unfortunate tendency to end, all stops out, in a resounding polysyllable: "O copybook of elves; I'd touched entelechy." Let her be anathema together with her lexicon!

The need to explain the world evident in this book does not,

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naturally, mean that what the poet explains is easy to understand. Many poems—perhaps some of the best and most original—cannot be fully understood till there is a larger body of Mr. O'Gorman's work behind them. The hazard of the practice of poetry, like that of any other vocation, is that the expense of first commitments is very great.

Uneasy Triumph

THE SCIENTISTS. By Eleazar Lipsky. Appleton-Century Croft. $4.95.

By JOHN P. SISK

I WOULD not be surprised to learn that some producer is even now planning how to make a super movie out of Mr. Lipsky's new novel. Consider the ingredients: brilliant, idealistic young scientist; beautiful Polish wife haunted by memories of wartime atrocities; beautiful and neurotic other woman; retired professor threatening career of former student with accusation of professional dishonesty in connection with new wonder drug; cynical public relations officer; subtle, unscrupulous lawyers; time-serving university officials; bizarre and illicit love affair; trial scenes; interlude in Mexico; birth of a baby; happy ending.

But the rundown is misleading. *The Scientists* is a serious novel of considerable power and not simply the disguised movie script that its synopsis might suggest. After an unpromising start the author combines a good grasp of character with an intimate knowledge of graduate school life, law, science and big business in a story with a whodunit structure in which the interest is nevertheless kept on character. A combination like this, one begins to realize towards the end of the book, is quite an achievement.

The Scientists is basically, and most Americanly, the story of the innocent idealist's encounter with complexity and evil, not only in others but in himself. David Luzzatto is the innocent scientist whose development of biocin is about to make possible a great new research center and perhaps even a Nobel prize. At this point his former teacher, Frederick Ullman, a powerful but enigmatic and crippled personality, brings suit against David, claiming that he has taken credit and financial profit for work not entirely his. In the act of defending himself David is initiated into a frightening world of faithlessness, evasion and deceit. Here he is finally able to resist the temptations to cynicism and despair and to emerge from the struggle with his idealism armored, if somewhat tarnished—for he has been forced in his extremity to employ some of the tactics of his enemies.

For the reader there may be an uneasy element in his triumph. "It's a growing up business," the arbitrator says to David after the suit has been decided in his favor. "In a way a certain amount of brutality is to your credit. Not nice! But then, life isn't nice. The smallest organism tends to devour its environment." To which David replies: "I had hoped for something better of myself." Is Mr. Lipsky telling us that the dedicated idealist must learn to meet evil on its own terms if he is to survive in an imperfect world? Or (a quite different thing) is he trying to show that the dedicated idealist whose innocence is itself a flaw often does, as a matter of fact, survive only at the expense of some corruption to himself?

Perhaps because these questions arise also in Robert Penn Warren's fiction I found *The Scientists* often reminding me of *All the King's Men* and *World Enough and Time*. A comparison of these two writers would point up some of Mr. Lipsky's weaknesses. But Mr. Lipsky has organized a vast amount of material into a compelling story that is ultimately more concerned with problems basic to human beings everywhere than to scientists as a special group.

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Unmodern Novel

MY FELLOW DEVILS. By L. P. Hartley. British Book Centre. $3.95.

By CHARLES MONAGHAN

HARDLY a serious American writer today would compose a novel without taking into account the technical innovations of twentieth century literary craftsmanship, and the challenge of innovation itself. But his English counterpart rarely feels such compulsion. This situation is historically undesirable. The American novel has always been susceptible to European influence, and that of Joyce and Proust has been dominant in the last generation. The English, however, have a strong home-grown tradition in the novel, and English writers have generally looked to this tradition, rather than outside of it, for inspiration. The result is the production of novels that resemble each other very much. Only the writer of genius can be at all distinctive.

L. P. Hartley's *My Fellow Devils* gives us a case in point. Though it unravels with excruciating slowness, Mr. Hartley's plot is solid and well-made. And his two main characters are memorably drawn. Yet despite these merits, echoes of Graham Greene, E. M. Forster and Jane Austen are so strong that Mr. Hartley must inevitably suffer by comparison.

Margaret Pennefather, Hartley's heroine, is a twenty-eight-year-old civic pillar in her suburban London community. She ends what seems to be a perfect engagement to marry Colum McInnes, a film star and a

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Roman Catholic. After an idyllic beginning, the marriage decays because of Colum's thievery (an unlikely avocation for a film star). Margaret takes refuge in her husband's Church and is converted.

Genteel yet uncultured, practical yet idealistic, Margaret is a brilliant portrait of an upper-middle-class English woman. Her conversion is entirely convincing: "The need to believe was as much part of her mental and emotional make-up as the need to love, indeed it was another aspect of the same thing, and perhaps circumstances had made it a more important aspect. She felt the need for certitude even more than love."

Mr. Hartley, an Anglican, is not writing a simple conversion story however. He is too much the artist for that. Against the advice of her spiritual adviser, Margaret abandons her husband when she embraces his Church, and her conversion, genuine enough in itself, seems the less for it: "Colum had become an abstraction to her, a mere symbol of his own dishonesty. That he should still exist as a man with feelings to be hurt after she had exorcised him hardly crossed her mind."

This is an oddly unmodern novel. Change Colum from a movie star to a theatrical matinee idol, and the entire story could just as easily take place a hundred years ago. If this doesn't upset the reader, and he doesn't mind a journey down a path that may seem faintly familiar, *My Fellow Devils* may be just his cup of tea. But he who makes a virtue of originality, and prefers novels which deal with or are reflective of his own time, may find the tea tepid and a bit flat.

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